

XXI.

PRAISE God, from whom pure blessing flows,
 Whole Bowels yearn on all below,
 Who would not have one Spout lost,
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

XXIII.

1. A L L Worship and Praise
 To the Architect of Days,
 The Father, the Word, and the Spirit of Grace,
 With our friends in the sky
 Let us glorify
 The Mystical Three that bear Record on high
 2. The Three that are One
 In a Mystery unknown
 The Substance Divine in a Mystery own;
 Till in Him we remove
 To his Presence above,
 And eternally plunge in the Depths of his Love.

XXIV.

F A T H E R, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 Thy Godhead we adore,
 Join with the Celestial Host
 Who praise Thee evermore;
 Live, by Earth and Heaven adored,
 Three in One, and One in Three,
 Holy, holy, holy Lord,
 All Glory be to Thee!

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The Antient

Method of Preaching;

As delivered in a

S E R M O N,

No less GODLY than LEARNED,

Preach'd at

St. Paul's Cross, in the Reign of King
RICHARD II. *Anno 1389.*

By R. WIMBLEDON.

Published from the Original MSS. found in the
Records of the Archbishop of *Canterbury*. Re-
vised and Corrected by a late eminent Preacher:
And humbly inscribed to the Clergy of the
Church of *England*.

*Hold your Peace, let me alone that I may speak,
and let come on me what will; For ye are
all Physicians of no Value* Job, Chap. xiii.

L O N D O N:

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MY dere Frends, yee shullen understand that Christ Autor and Doctor of Truth, in his Book of the Gospel saith on this manner: *Like as the Kingdom of Heaven to an housholding man, that went out first on the morrow to hire Workmen into his Vine. Also about the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours he went out, and found men standing idle, and said to them, Go ye into mine Vineyard, and that right is, I will give you. When the Day was agoo, he cleped his steward, and bigh to give each man a peny.* *called*

The spiritual understanding of this housholder is our Lord Jesus Christ, that is head of the household of holy Church. And thus clepeth men in diuerce hours of the Day, that is in diuerce Agees of the World. As in time of law of kind, he cleped by enspiring *Abel, Ennok, Noe, and Abraham.* In time of the old Law, *Moses, David, Isay, and Jeremy*: and in time of Grace, Apostles Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins. Also he cleped men in diuers Agees, some on Childhode, as *John Baptist*; some on state of wexing, as *John the Evaungelist*; some in state of manhode, as *Peter and Andrew*; and some in old Agee, as *Gamaliel, and Joseph of Arimatbie*; and all these he cleped to travaile in his Vine, that is the Church, and that in diuerce manner. For right as yee seeth, that in tilling the Vine there ben diuerce labors, for some kut-

ten away the voide braunches, some maken forkis and nailes to beren up the Vine, and some diggen away the olderth fro the rote, and leyn there fatter. And all this Offices ben so necessary to the vine, that if any of them fail, it shall harm greatly, other destroy the vine. For if the vine be kut, she shall wax wild; but if she be railed, she shall be overgo with nettles and wedis; but if the rote be fatted with dong, she for febleness shuld wax barraine.

Right so in the Church beth nedeful these three offices Priesthode, Knythode, and Laborers. To Priests it falleth, to kut away the void Braunches of Sinnes with the swerd of her tong. To Knythode it falleth to letten wrongs and thefts to be done, and to maintaine Goddis law, and them that ben teachers thereof, and also to kepe the lond fro enemies of other londs. And to Laborers it falleth to travaile bodelich, and with their sore swete, geten out of the erth bodilich lifelode for hem, and other parties. And these states beth also nedeful to the Church, that none may well ben without other: for if Priesthode lacked, the People for default of knowen of Goddis law, should wax wild in vices, and deyen ghostly; and if the Knythode laked, and men to rulen the pople by law and hardiness, theeves and enemies shulden so encreas, that no man shuld live in peace. And if the laborers were nought, both Knyts and Priests must become acre men and herdis, and else they shuld, for default of bodily sustenance, dey. And therefore saith Clearke *Avicenne*

kenne, that every unreasonable beast, if he have that whych kind hath ordained for him, as kind hath ordained, he is suffisuaunce to live by himself, without any help of other of of the same kind. As if ther were but one horse, other one shepe in the World, yet if he had grasse and corne, as kind hath ordained for such beasts, he shuld live well now. But if ther ne were but O man in the World, though he had all that good that is therein, yet for default he shuld dey, or his life shuld be wors than if he were naught; and the cause is this, for that thing that kind ordaineth for a mans sustenaunce, without other arraieng than it hath of kind, akcordeth naught to him. As though a man have corne as it commeth from the erth, yet it is no meat akcording to him, until it be by mans craft chaunged into bread: and though he have flesh other fish, yet while it is raw, as kind ordained it, till it bee by mans travaile sodden, roasted, or baken, it cordeth not to mans lifelode. And right so, wolle that the sheepe beareth, mot by mans diverce craftis and travailes bee chaunged or it bee able to cloth any man; and certis O man, by himself shuld never doe all these labours. And therefore saith this Clearke, It is need that some bee acre men, some bakers, some makers of cloth, and some merchaunts to fetch that, that one lond fetcheth from another ther it is plenty.

And certis this should bee a cause why everich state should love other. And men of a craft

shuld not despise ne hate men of none other
 craft, sith they bee so nedeful everich to other.
 And of thelke craftis that been most unhonist,
 might worst been forebore: And O thing I
 dare well say, that he that is nither travailling
 in this world, on studying, on prayers, on
 preaching, for helpe of the pople as it falleth
 to Priests, nither ruling the pople, maintain-
 ing ne defending fro enemies, as it falleth to
 knyts, nither travailling on the earth, in di-
 verce craftis, as it falleth to laborers: When
 the day of rekening commeth, that is, the end
 of this life, right as hee lived here withouten
 travaile, so hee shall there lacke the reward of
 the peny. And as hee was here living after
 none state ne order, so he shall bee putten
 in that place that no order is in, but everlasting
 horror and sorrow, that is, in Hell. Here-
 fore, everich man see to what state God hath
 cleped him, and dwell hee therein by travaile,
 akcording to his degree. Thou that art a la-
 borer or a crafty man, doe this truly. If
 thou art a servant or a bondman, be sugget,
 and low in drede of displeasing of thy Lord.
 If thou art a merchaunt deceive not thy bro-
 ther in chaffering. If thou art a Knyt, or a
 Lord, defend the poor man and needy fro
 hands that will harme hem. If thou art a
 Priest, undernine, pray, and reprieve, in all
 manner, patience, and doctrine. Undernine,
 thilke that been negligent, pray for thilke
 that been obedient, reprove tho that been un-
 obedient to God. So everich man travaile in his
 degree.

degree. For when the even is come, that is, the end of this world, then everich man shall take reward, good or evil, after that he hath travailed here.

The words that I have taken to make of my Sarmon, be thus much to say: Yeld rekening of thy baily. Christ autor of pitie, and lover of the salvashun of his Pople, enformeth everich man what is his baily, by manner of a Parable of a baily that he speaketh of, to array him to answer of the goodes that God hath taken him, when the day of strait rekonning shall bee come, that is, the day of doom.

But for further processe of this Sarmon, ye shullen wete; that there shullen bee three bailiffes that shall bee cleped to this strait rekening. Twaine to answer for hemselfe and for other, that been Priests that have cure of mens soules, and temporal men that have governaile of people; and the third bailiffe shall account onely for himselfe, and that every Christenman, of that he hath received of God. And everich of these shall anser to three questions.

To the first question, How hast thou entered? the second, How hast thou ruled? And to the third, How hast thou lived? And if thou canst well affoile these three questions, was ther never none erthly Lord that ever so well rewarded his servaunt without comparison, as thy Lord God shall reward thee, that is, with blisse, and joy, and life that ever shall last. But on that other side, and thou wilt now be recheles of thine own welfare, and take none heed,

heed, of this rekening : If that day take thee suddenly, so that thou passe hence in deadly sinne (as thou wotst never what shull fall thee) all the tongs that ever were, or ever shull bee, mow not tell the sorrow and woe that thou shalt ever bee in, and suffer. Therefore the desire of so great joy, and the dread of so great paine, though love ne dread of God were not in thine heart, yet should make thee asfear'd to sinne, for to thinke that thou shalt give reckoning of thy baily. Therefore as I say to thee, the first questiun that shull bee proposed to the first bailey, that is a Prelat, other a Curat of mens soules, is this :

How hast thou entered : Matth. 22. Friend, how entredst thou hether ? Who brought thee into this Office ? Truth or Simony ? God or the Devil ? Grace or Mony ? The Flesh or the Spirit ? Give thou the rekening if thou canst. If thou canst not, I rede that thou tarry for to lern. For up hap ere night thou shalt be cleped. And if thou stand dombe for unkunning, or else for confushun of thy consunce, thou fall into the sentance that anon followeth : Binde his honds and his feet, and cast him into utterward of darkness, there shall be weeping and grenning of teeth. Therefore I rede thee, that thou advise thee how thou shalt anser to this questiun : wether by cleping, or by thine own procuring ? for that thou wouldest travaile in Goddis Gospell, other for that thou wouldest bee richly arraied ? Anser now to thine owne consunce as thou shalt anser to God, thou
that

that hast take now the order of Priest, whether thou be Curat of none: who stirred thee to take upon thee so high an estate? Whether for thou wouldest live as a Priest ought to doe, studying of Goddis law to preach, and most heartily to pray for the pople; or for to live a delicious life upon other mans travaile, and thy self travaile nought. Why also setten men their sonnes, other their cousins to schoole? Where to but for to get hem great advancements, or to make hem the better to know how they shulden serve God? This men may see openly by the Siences that they set hem to. Why I pray you put men their sonnes to the Law Civell, or to the King's Court to write Letters and Writs, rather than to Philosophy or Divinity, but for the hope that these okcupations should be ever meanes to make hem great in the world. I hope that there will no man say, that they ne shuld better lerne the rule of good living in the Book of Goddis Law, than in any Bookes of mans worldly wisdome. But certes now it is soothe, that *John Chrysostom* saith, *Moters bee loving to the bodies of their children, but the soule they despise; the lust of their bodies they woll deere buy, but the helth of their soule they reke nought of. If they see them poore or sicke, they sorrow and sitheth, but though they see them sinne they sorrow not. And in this they shew that they brought forth the bodies, but not the soules.*

And if wee take heed truly, what abominations bee skattered and spred in holy Church
now

now adaies among Priests, we shull well wit, that they come not all to the fold of Christ by Christs cleping, but by otherwaies to get hem worldly welth, and this is the cause of lesing of soules, that Christ bought so deare, and of many errours among the people; and therefore it is ywrit in the Book of Mourning, where the Prophet speaketh thus to God, *Thren.*

1. The enemy hath put his hond to all things desirable to him; for hee hath let lawles folke enter into the Sanctuary, of the which thou hadst commaunded that they shuld not enter into the Church, This enemy is Satanas, as his name sowneth, that hath put his hand, to all that him liketh. What sinne I pray you, will the fiend have sow on men that yis now yused? In what plenty is now pride, envy, wroth, and covetise, when were they so great as they be now? and so of all other sinnes. And why trowest thou? But for there be a lawles people entered into thy Sanctuary, that nither keep in themselfe the law of God, konne teachen other; and to everich such saith God by the Prophet, *Ose 4. For that thou hast put away kunning, I shall put thee away, that thou shall use no Priesthood to mee,*

The second Question that everich Curat and Prelat of Holy Church shall anser to, is this: *How hast thou ruled?* That is to say, the soules of thy fuggets, and the goodes of poore men: Give now thine accounts. First, how thou hast governed Goddis folke that were take thee to keepe? Wether thou art an herd or an hired
man

man, that doſt all for love of bōdelich hire? As a fader, or as a wolfe that eaten his ſheepe, and keepeth them nought? Say, whom haſt thou turned from his curſed living by thy devoute preaching? Whom haſt thou taught the law of God that was earſt unkunning? Ther ſhull been heard a grevous accusing of fatherleſs children, and a hard alledging, that Prieſtes have liveden by their wages, and not done away ther finnes. Yeld alſo rekening how thou haſt ruled, and ſpended the goodes of poore men. Harke what Sainte *Bernard* ſaith: Dread Clerkes, dread the Miniſters of the Church, the which ben in the place of Saintes, that they doe ſo wikcedly, nought houlding them apaid with ſuche wages that were ſuffiſaunce to them; that overplus that needy men ſhould be ſuſtained bye, they bee not aſhamed to waſte in the houſe of ther pride and lechery, and withholden to themſelfe wikcedly and curſedly that which ſhuld bee the liſeloode of poore men. With double wikcedneſſe truely they finne. Firſt, for they reven other mennis goodes, and ſaith, they miſuſe holy things in ther vanities and in ther filthes. Everich ſuch baily therfore beware, for anon to the laſt farthing hee ſhull reken with Chriſte. Troweſt thou not then that thou ne ſhalt be diſallowed of God, of that thou haſt miſpended in feeding of fat Pal-freys, of Houndes, of Hawkes, and if it ſo bee, that is worſt of all, on lecherous Women? Heare what is ſaide of ſuch, They had led their daies in welths: And in a point they ben gone downe
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into

into hell. Thinke therefore I rede thee, that thou shalt yeld rekening of thy baily.

The thirde Questiu that this baily shullen anser to, is this: How hast thou lived? as a Priest, or as a leude man, as a man, or as a beast. Alas, how the life of Priestes is chaunged. They bee clothen as Knytes, they speaken as unhoneestly as carles; other of winning as Merchaunts; they riden as Princes, and all that is thus spended, is of the goodes of poore men, and of Christs heritage. Therefore saithe an holy Doctour, The clay of *Egypt* was tough and stinking, and medled with bloud. The slates were hard to bee undone, for they were baked with Fire of covetise, and with the light of lust. And if I shall the sooth say, saithe this Doctor, oft time poore men bee robbed for to clothe the trees and stones. Of such speaketh the Prophet, How art thou here, who art thou? Here thou art occupying the place of *Peter* and of *Paul*: But how, as *Judas* among the Apostles, as *Simon Magus* among the Disciples; as a Candle new queint that stincheth all the house instead of a light lanterne, as a smoke that blindeth mens eien, in place of clean fire? If thou contrary thus the forme of living that Christe and his Disciples leste to Priestes, Lo what saithe the Prophet *Jeremy*, They have entered, and they have had, and they have not ben obedient to the law of God in ther owne living. Therefore it is writ that the hardest dome shall fall on such. An hard dome, for they have mis-entered: An harder dome, for they have mis-ruled

ruled: And the hardest dome, for they have so cursedly lived. Think therefore I rede, how thou wilt give rekening of thy baily.

The second bailiffe that akcounteth at this dome for himselfe, and alsoe for other, is hee that keeping hath of any communitie, as Kynges, Princes, Majors, and Shireves, and Justices. And these shull alsoe anser to the same three Questions. The first Questiun, How hast thou entered, that is to say, into thine Office? Other for helpe of the pople to destroye falshed and furtheren truthe? Other for desire of winning of worldly worship: If thou take such an Office, more for thine owne worldly profit than for helpe of the communitie, thou art a Tyrant as the Philosopher seith. Of whych God saithe by the Prophet, *They have raigned but nought of mee, they have ben princes, but I know nought.* So we rede of Rehoboam, that was the sonne of King Salomon, what time hee was first Kynge, the pople of *Israel* comen to him and sayd, *Thy father in his last daies put on us greate charge. Wee pray thee some deale make it lighter, and wee willen serve thee.* And the King tooke counsell of the old wise men, and they counsailden to anser hem faire, and that shuld bee for the best. But hee left these old wise mennis counsaile, and did after the counsaile of childern that were his playferen, and sayd to the pople when they comen againe: *My left finger is greater than my fathers riegge: My father grieved you somewhat, but I will echen more therto.* And the pople heared this, and rebelled to him, and took hem anothor King: and

sith, the Kingdome came never whole againe : and therefore it is good, that everich ruler of commonalties, that they bee not lad by follies, ne by none other care rowner, that hee ne have an eygh of love to the comonty that hee hath to rule. For wete yee well, bee hee never so high, that he shall come afore higher, to yeeld rekening of his baily.

The second Questiun is, *How hast thou ruled the people and the office that thou haddest to govern?* O Lord, what abusuns is there among officers of both Lawes now adaies : If a great man pleadeth with a poore man to have ought that he holdeth, everich officer shull be ready to hie all that he may that the rich man might have such an end as hee desired. But if a poore man plead with a rich man, then there shull be so many delaies, that though the poore mans ryght bee open to all the countrie, for pure fault of spending hee shull bee glad to cease. Shrieves and Bailiffes willen returne poore mennis writs, with *tarde venit*, but gif they felen meed in their honds. And yet I here say, men that hath seyen both lawes, and ilke Court that is cleped Christs Court, is much more cursed. Therefore it is writ, giftes they take out of mennis bosoms, to overturn the ryght way of dome. But it is to drede the worde of Christ; in what dome yee deme, yee shull be demed when yee comen to yelde a rekening of your baily.

The third Questiun is, *How hast thou lived, thou that deemest and punishest other men for*
ther

ther trespasse? A great Doctour saith thee be-
hooveth to flee the wikcednesse of other men that
thou chastiest them for their trespasse. For if thy
self do unlawfullich in deeming other men, thou
damnest thy self, syth thou dost that thou
damnest. And *Paul* saith, why techeest thou
nought thy self, that thou techeest other? Why
stealest thou, that techeth nought other men to
steal? *St. Gregory* saith, he shall not take the
governail of other, that cannot go before them in
good living. But it is to drede, that many fareth
as tve false Priests that woulde have damned to
death Holy *Susan* for she wold not assent to their
lechery. Of the which it is ywrit, they turned
away their eyen, for they wold not see Heven,
ne have mind of ryghtful domes. So it happeth
oft they that were more worthy to be hanged,
damneth hem that be les worthy, as a Clerke
telleth of *Socrates* the Philosopher, saith he, up-
on a daie a man asked him why he laughed: And
he said, for I see great Theeves leading a little
Theef to hanging. I pray thee, wether is he
a greater Theef that benimmeth a Man his House
and his Lond from him and from his Heirs for
evermore, other he that for making of great
need stealeth a Sheep or a Calf? But I rede thee,
that thus deemest other, think on that dome thou
shalt come to, to yeld the rekening of thy bai-
ly.

The Third Bailiffe that shall be cleped to this
dredeful account shall geve rekening to his Lord
for goodes that he had had of his. And
here I will speke but of the first Questiuon, that

is this, How entredst thou? And here by the way, ye that have got any worldly good, other take by extortion, by ravine, by usury, other by deceit: Woe shull be to him at this dredful day, as St. *Austen* saith. Gyf he be cast into the fire that hath not given of his own good; where trowest thou shull he be castin, that hath reved other mennis fro them? And gyf he shull bren with the fend that hath nought clothed the naked, where trowest thou he bren that hath made him naked that was erst clothed? But as St. *Gregory* saith, Twe things maken men to live thus by ravaide of ther neighbours, that they desire heynes and dread poverty, and what vengeance falleth of this sinne of covetise, I may see by figure in holy writ, when the Angel said to the Prophet *Zachery*, Reare up thyne eien, and see what it is that goeth out. And the Prophet said, what is it? Then the Angel said, This is the Pot going out, This is the eize of hem on all the Earth, and there was a weight of leade ybore, and there was a Woman sitting in the middle of this Pot, And the Angel said, This is ympiety: and he took her and cast her into the middle of this Pot, and he took the gobbet of lead and cast it into the Potis mouth. And the Prophet lifted up his eien, and he saw twe Women coming out and they hadden Wingis like Kytes other gledes, and they arerid up this Pot between Heven and Erth, and then the Prophet spake to the Angel, wider woll thees bear this Pot? And he said, unto the Lond of *Sennaar*: This Pot is covetise. For ryght as a Pot hath a wide open mouth, so covetise gapeth after worldly good: and ryght as the licour
in

in the Pot profiteth nought to the Pot, but to men that drawen and drinken thereof: so worldly good oft profiteth not to Churles, but to other that cometh after, as it is written. He that hath Munny shull have no Fruit of it: and this covetise is the eie of covetous men, for they ben blind to see how they shullen go to Heven, but to the winning of worldly things they see many ways, lyke to Owles and night Crowes, that seen better by night than by day. The gobbet of lead, is the sinne of obstination. The Woman that sat in the Pot, is ympiety, as the Angel said, that followeth unryghteousnesse and avaryce. For through avaryce a man leese the pity that he shuld have of the mischief of his soule. For oft time men leese the lyfe of their soule by dedly sinne, that they do to have the worldly winning, and also they leese the Pity that they shuld have of their body, putting themselves to many great bodilich travayls and perils both by Sea and Lond, and all maketh covetise. This Pot is stopped with the gobbet of lead, when ympiety is thus by sinne of obstination closed in covetise, that he may not go out of the chynches hart by penance. For as *Job* saith; when hee is fulfilled, he shull be stopped. The Twe Women that bare up this Pot, are pryde and luste of flesh, that bee cleped in holy writ the twe daughters of the watr Leache, crying, bring, bring. And they had winges, the first wing is grace spiritual, as kunning, wisdom, and counsell, with such other many. For which giftes many men
wexe

wexe proud. The second wing is bodilich grace, as strength, fairehood, gentry, and many other such; whereof men wexe proud. The wings of the second Woman, that is, fleshly desire, beth gluttony and sloth. Of gluttony speaketh St. *Gregory*; when the wamb is fulfilled, the prickles of lechery beth moved. And of sloth St. *Augustine* saith, *Lot* the while he dweled in business among shrewes in *Sodome*, he was a good man. But when he was in the hill *Zowar*, for sykkernes he in his drunkenesse lay by his daughtren.

When covetise *Balaam* would, for giftes that the Kyng proferd him, have cursed Goddis pople, his own Afs reproved him, and hurt his foot against a wall. *Achor* was stoned to deth: for covetise made him steal gold and cloathes, against the commaundment of God. *Giesy* was smit with Mefilty, for he sold *Naamans* heal, that came of Goddis grace. *Judas* for covetise sold Christe, and afterwards hong himself. *Anany* and *Zaphira* his Wyfe were dead sodenly, for they forsoken to give *Peter* their Munny that they had. And covetise maketh also that rich man eate the poor, as Beastis done their lesous holding them low. This may we see all day indeed I dread. For if a rich man have a Field and a poore man have in the midst, or in the side thereof, one Acre, and a rich man have all a Street saveth O House, that some poor Brother of his oweth, he ceseth never till he get it out of the poore Mannis hond, ither by prayer, or by buying, or by persuing of deceit. Thus fared it by Kyng *Achab*, that through his
false

false Queenes gin slew the poore mon *Naboth*, for that hee wuld not sell hym his Vynyard that was nygh to the Kyngis Palace.

Upon which proceffe, thus sayth Sainte *Ambrose*; How farre will ye riche men stretch your covetise? Will ye dwell alone upon the Erth, and have no poore Mon with you? Why put ye out your fellow by kind, and challenge to yourselfe the possession comen by kind? In commune to all, rich and poore, the Erth was made. Why will ye rich challenge proper ryght herein? Kind knoweth no riches. For we bee not got with rich Clothes, ne born with Gold, ne with Silver. Naked he bringeth hem to this World, needy of meat, of drink, and clothing. Naked the Erth taketh us and she naked brought us hider. Shee cannot close with us our possession in the Sepulcre, for kind maketh no difference between poor and rich. in coming hider, ne in going hence. All in o manner shee bringeth forth, all in o manner shee closeth in grave. Whosoe will make difference of poore and rich, abyde till they have a little while leyne in the grave, and then open and look among the dead bones who was rich, and who was poore. Woe unto hem that repen other mennis felde, and fro the vine of him that the harme oppressed doe plucke away the Grapes; they leven men naked, and taken away ther Clothes that hath nought werewith to hele hem in cold, and listen up this Pot bytween Heven and Erth. For covetise men nother haveth charity to their Brethren upon Erth, nither to God in Heven; and they bare this pot into the Lond of *Sennaar*,

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that

that is to say, into the Lond of *Stenche*, that is Hell, for there shull be *stenche*, instead of sweete smelling, as *I say* saith. Beware I rede, that ye nought have to doe with this Pot, ne with the Woman therein, and on all manner that ye be nought weddid to her, for then yee must be both one. This is thilke foule lecherous Woman: The Kynges and Morchauntis of the Erth have done lechery, and of her vertue they have been made rich, whose damnaſhun is wrytten in the Booke of Privities in these wordes, In o day shull come all these vengeance of her deth, weeping and hunger and fire shull brenne her, for strong is God that shull venge him on her, and then shulle weepe and howle uppon her, the Kynges of the Erth, that haveth done lechery with her, and haven lived in Delices when they shull see the Smoke of her brenning, stonding aserre weeping and weyling and seying: Alas! Alas! thilke great City that was clothed with bys and purple, and brafile, and over gilt with Gold and pretious Stones and Pearle. For in one houre all these great riches shull be destroyed, then shullen they sey that shull be damned with her. We have erred fro the way of trouth and rightwisnes, and the funne of understanding have not risen to us: we have be made weery in everich way of wikcednesse and of lust, and have gone hard waies, but the waies of God we knew not: what hath Pride profited to us, or the boste of riches what hath it brought to us? All this is as a shadow of deth, and we mow now shew no token of holynesse, in our wikcednesse wee be wasted away. Think ther-

therefore I rede, that thou shull yeld rekening of thy bayly.

With the helpe of God, I wull now shew first, who shull clepe us to this rekening, afterward, tofore what Judge we shull rekyn, and last what punishing shull be doe to hem that been found false servants and wikced, and what reward shull be give to hem that be found good and true. For the first, ye shull wetoen that there shull be twey domes. The first dome anone after the departyng of bodie and soule. The secund rekening or dome shull be anone after the general resurrecshun. To the first everich mon shull be cleped after other, as the world passeth. To the secund shull come togedre in the stroke of an eie all monkind. To the first men shull be cleped with three Sumners, other Sergeaunts: The first is Sicknesse, the secund is Age, and the third is Deth; the first warneth, the secund threteth, and the third taketh. This is a kindly order, but otherwise it faileth, for summe wee see dien that never wist what was Sicknesse ne Age, as childern that been suddenly slain. And summe, yea the most part that dyen now adaies, deyen before ther kind agee of deeth. Therefore, I say, that the first that clepeth to this special rekening is sicknesse that followeth all mankind, so that everich mon hath it: and summe is Sicknesse that summe men haveth, but nought all. Some haven a fore Sicknesse of the Spirit, by whych, though a mon shut out of the house of his heart all manner of worldly and fleshy thoughts, yet unneth shall he, for ought that hee can do, think on God

only, the space of o *Pater noster*, but that summe other thing that is passing entreth into the soul, and draweth her from contemplashun. Of this sicknesse speaketh *Paul*, where he saith ; *I see a Law in my limmes fighting agenes the Law of my Spirite, and taking me into the Law of sinne*. Right so, syth *Adam* our first fader was put out of Paradise, all his Off-spring have been thus sicke, as the Prophet seyth. Our faders have eate a bytter Grape, and the teeth of the children bee waxe an edge. One sicknesse that is commune to all mankind, commith of feeblenesse of the body, as hunger and thurst, colde and heate, sorrow and wearinesse, and many other, as *Job* saith A mon that is ybore of a Woman, lyving a littil while, is fulfilled with many misceses. Yet ther is other sicknesse that cometh to some men, but not to all, as Lepyr, Palsya, Fever, Dropfie, Blindnesse, and many other, as it was seyden to the Pople of *Israel* in holie writ. But thou keepe the Commaundements that bee writ in this Booke, God shull achen the sicknesse of thee and of thy seed, grete sicknesse and long abiding. Yet yee shull understond, that God sendeth otherwhile such sicknesse to other men, and otherwhile to shrews. And thus saith *Paul*, lest the greatnesse of revelations rere me up into pride, is given a prycke of my flesh, the Angel of *Sathanas* to smite me on the neck, wherefore I have thrice prayed God that he shuld go fro me, and he answered me : My grace is suffisaunce to thee, for vertue is fulfilled in sicknesse. GOD sendeth sicknesse and per-

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secution to *Saincts*, to give us sinful wretchis example of patience : For if he suffer his saincts to have such Tribulation in this World, and they thankin him thereof, much more wretchis, that God sendeth not the hundred aparty of their sorrow, shulden beare it meekly, sith wee have deserved a thousand so much as they haveth. Whereof *Toby*, when he was weary of burying of poore men, the which shulden have ley unburied, and have bee etene of houndis, and foules, as Carynes of other unreasonable Beastis, when for wearinesse he had leyde him to rest, through Goddis sufferaunce the Swallowes that bredden on above on his hous, maden ordure into his eyen, and he waxed blinde. Thus it is ywrit of this Temptashun forsooth ; GOD suffered to come to him, that to them that comen after shuld bee given ensample of patience, as by the temptashun of holy *Job*. For sith from his Childhood evermore he dred God, and ever keyt his Hestes ; was not agreed ayenst GOD that mischief fell to him ; but unmoveable dwelled in the dred of GOD, thanking him all the daies of his life. Also otherwhile GOD sendeth siknesse and tribulation to wikced men for that they shuld drede him, and leave ther sinne. For we see oft men in sicknesse know ther GOD, that never wuld have turned to him while they had been whole. Alsoe God sendeth hem sicknesse oft to agast other men, lest they follow ther sinne. As the sicknesse of Kynge *Antioche*, whom GOD smote with suche a sicknesse, that Wormes fell out of his bodie whyle hee lived, in soe far forth
that

that hee stank soe foule, that his frendes myght not suffer it. And at the last, when he himselfe myght not suffer his owne stinch, then he began to know himselfe and sayd, *It is ryghtfull to bee sugget to GOD, and a dedely manne not to holde himselfe onely even with him*; and the storie saieth, Hee axed mercie of God, and made a vowe to him, that hee wolde make the citie of *Jerusalem* free, and the *Jews* to make hem as free as the men of *Athens*; and that hee wolde honoure Goddis temple with pretious ary, and multiplie the holie vessels, and himselfe wolde become a *Jew*, and go over all the lond to preche Goddis myghte. And yet God gafe him not suche mercie as hee desired. And I trow that it was for goode. Inasmuch as God knew hee wolde not afterwardes holde his covenant, or else for hee axed it too late. Neverthelesse, I trow hee was not damned; for repentaunce in this lyfe come never too late if it bee true. The second Somner that shull clepe thee to this particular dome, is elde or age. And the condition of him is this, he will not leve thee, till he bring thee to the third, that is deth. But there be many that though they have this Somner with them, they take ne heed, though they see her, her back crooked, her breth stink, her teethe fail, her yien derk, her visage rively, her crene weixt hevy to her. What meaneth all this, but that age somneth to the dome, and thou must come to yeede rekening of thy baily.

The third somner to this rekening, is deth.
And

And the condition of him is, that whenever he come, first, other the secund, other the last hour he ne spareth, neythor power, ne yough, he ne dredeth thretning, ne he taketh hede of prayer, ne of giste; he graunteth ne respit but withouten delay he bringeth to the dome.

I sayd alsoe, that ther shull bee another dome, to the whych all men shull come togedre, and this shull bee at the last daie. And ryght as to the other dome, everich mon shull bee cleped with three sumnours; so to this dome all this world shull bee cleped with three general clepers. And ryght as the other three Messengers tell a monnis end, so these tell the end of the Worlde, the fyrst cleper is worldly sicknesse, the secund cleper is feblenesse, and the third is the end. The sicknesse of the world thou shult kno by Charity acooling. His elde and feblenesse thou shult kno by tokens fulfilling, and his end thou shult kno by Antichristis pursuing. Fyrst I sayd, thou shult kno the worldis sicknesse by charity acooling. Clerkes that treate of kinde sayne; that a body is sicke, when his bodilich heate is too lite, or when his unkindely heate is too much fyth then all monkinde is one body, whose kindelie heate is charity, that is, love to GOD and to our neighbours; and unkindely heate is lustful love to other creatures, when thou seest that the love of men to Godward and to their neighbour is littil and faint, and the love of worldly thyngis and lustes of the flesh is great and fervent; then wit thou well, that unkindely heate is too great, and kindely heate is too little. Therefore when thou seest charity
thus

thus little in the worlde, and wikcednesse encrease, kno well that this world passeth and this sumner is come. And thus seyeth St. *Paul*, Wit ye weil that in the last daies shull come perilous times, and there shull bee men loving themselves, that is to sey, ther bodies, covetise, pridely, unobedient to Fader and Moder, unkynde felons, withouten affection, withouten peace, yncontinent, unmilde, withouten benignity, traytors, rebels, lovers of lusts more than of God, having a likeness of pyety, and denying the vertue thereof. And these flee thou.

The second sumnour that warneth all the worlde, is elde or age of the worlde and shewes tokens fulfilling. But I knowe well that wee bee nought suffisaunt to knowe the times, other the whiles, that the Fader in Trynity hath put on to shew certeinly the day, yere, other houre of this dome, sithe this knowlech was hide fro the privy Apostles of Christe, and from Christes manhold to shew it to us. Nathlesse kno wee inough by authority of holy Write, with reions, and expofishuns of Saintes well and openly shew, that this daie of wrath is nygh: How nygh nathlesse can I not seie en wole. For if *Paul* said now for a Thousand and three hundred yeare, and passed moe; wee ben thilke into whom the endis of the worlde ben come, much rather may wee seie the same that been so much neere the end than he was. And also Abbot *Joachim* in expofishun of *Jeremy* seyeth; Fro the yeere of our Lord 1200, all times beth suspected to mee, and wee ben passed on this suspect nygh

nigh 200 yeares. Alsoe maiden *Hildegare* in the Booke of her prophesie the third parte, the eleventh vision, the seventh Chapter meveth this reson. Ryghte as on seven daies GOD made the worlde, soe in 7000 yeare, the worlde shull passe. And ryghte as in the sixth daie mon was made and fourmed; soe in 6000 yeare hee was brought again and reformed. And as in the seventh day the worlde was full made, and God leste off his worken, ryght soe in the 7000 yeare, the number of them that shullen be saved shull be fullfilled, and rest shull be to Seyntes full in bodie and soule. If that it bee soe as it seemeth to follow of this maydens wordes, that 7000 in passen of the worlde accordeth to seven daies in his maken it, see what lacketh that these 7000 yeares ne beth fullfilled. For if wee reken the number of yeares fro the Nativitie of Christ, to the yeares fro the beginning of the worlde to Christ. And thou wilt follow *Austine*, *Bede*, *Orosie*, and most probable Doctours treating of this matter, are passed now almost fixe thousand and fixe hundred, as it is open in the Booke that is ycleped *Speculum judiciale*. So it suweth that this laste daie is more than a halfe agoe, if we shulden give credence to this maydens resun: But if we follow the Gospell, than we shull finde in *Matthew*, that the Disciples axiden of Christ three Questions. First, what time the City of *Jerusalem* shuld be destroyed. The Second, what token of his coming to the dome. And the Third, what signe of the ending of the worlde.

But Christ gave hem no certayne time of these

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things when they shulden falle, but he gave hem tokens, by which they might know when they drew nigh, and so as to the fyrst Question of the destruction of *Jerusalem* he sayd; when the *Romanes* come to besiege that City, then soon after she shall be destroyed.

And as to the secund and thyrd; he gave many tokens, that is to say; That Realme shall rise against Realme, and pople against pople, and pestilences, and earthquakens, the which we have seene in our daies. But the laste token that he gave, was this; When ye seene the abominashun of elengnesse said of *Danyel* the Prophet, standen on the Sanctuary; then who so readeth, understand. Upon whych text, thus argueth a Doctour in a Booke that he maketh of the ende of the worlde. If the wordes of *Danyel* haven authoritie (as GOD sayeth that they haven) it sufficeth of the number of the yeares of the ende of the worlde, that *Danyel* hath written. Now *Danyel* in the twelfth Chapter, speaken of this abominashun, putteth betweene the ceasing of the busie Sacrifice of the *Jewes*, the which fell when by *Titus* and *Vespacianus* *Jerusalem* was destroyed, and the pople of the *Jewes* were disparkled into all the worlde. And this abominashun that Doctours sayne shall be in the great Antichristes daies 1290. Now proveth this Doctour that a daie must be taken for a yeare, both by authoritie of holy Writ in the same place and in other, and alsoe by reasun: So it seemeth to this Clerke, that the great Antichriste shuld come in the 1400 yeare fro the birth of Christ, the which number of
yeares

yeares is now fullfilled, not fully twelve yeares and a halfe lacking. And this refun put not I as to shew any certaine time of this coming, sith I have not that knowletch; but to shew that he is nye, but how nygh I wot never.

In all this matter have I nought, seid of my selfe, but of other Doctours, that beth proved, I seyde alsoe in my secund principal part, that it were to wete, tofore what Judge wee shull rekyn. Wherefore wee shullesh wite that God himselfe shull heare this rekenyng, hee that seeth all our dedis, and all our thoughtis fro the beginning of our lyfe to the ende, and he shull shew there the hid thyngis of our hert, openen to all the worlde the ryghtfulnesse of his dome. And so it seemeth by the wordis of St. *John* in the Booke of Privities, there he seith thus, *I saw dede men, little and great, standing in the sight of the throne, and bookes weren opened; and another booke was opened that was of lyfe, and dede men weren judged after the things that weren written in the bookes after their worchings.* These bookes beth mennis conshunces that now beth closed. But then they shullen bee opened to all the worlde to redden therein both dedis and thoughtis. But the booke of life is Christis living and doctrine, that is now hid to men that shullen bee damned through their own malice, that deemeth men to serve the world rather than God: In the first booke shull bee write all that wee haveth doe, in that other booke shull bee write all that wee shulden have doe, and then shulle dede men bee demyd of thilke thingis that ben written in the Bookis: For

if the dedis that wee haven doe, the whych beene written in the bookis, of our consunce, bee according to the booke of Christis teaching, and his living, the whych is the booke of life wee shall bee saved, or else wee shall bee damned, for the dome shall bee given after our workis. Looke therefore now what thing is wrytten in the booke of thy consunce, while thou art here: and if thou findest ought contrary to Christis life, other to his teaching, with the knyfe of penaunce and repentaunce scrape it away and write it better, evermore hertly thinking that thou shalt yelde reckening of thy bayly.

Also it were to witen, what reward shall be geve on that dome, to wise servaunts and good, and what to false servaunts and wikked. For the whych is to wite, that our Lord Jesus Christ shall come to the dome here into this worlde, in the same bodie that he tooke of our Ladie, having thereon the woundis that he suffered for our again bieng. And all that ever shullen be saved, taken againe their bodies clyving to their heed, Christ, shall be ravished metyen him in the aire, as *Paul* saith: They that shall be damned lyen upon the erth, as in a tonne of Wine the dreggis dwellen byneth, and the cliere wine hoveth above. Then shall Christ axe reckening of the deedis of mercie, reproving false Christenmen for the levyen of them, rehersen the deeds of the same, and other truthis by the whych his true servaunts then followed him; then shulle thilke false servaunts goe with the Devil, whom they have served in the Erth, that swallowen into the endlesse fire. And
ryghtful

ryghtful Men shullen goe into everlasting life; then shall be fulfilled that is written in the booke of Privities? Woe, woe, woe, to hem that dwel-
len in the Erth. Woe to the paynym that gafe that worship to dead Images wrought of mannis honds: Woe to the *Jew* that trusteth soe much in the old Lawe, then shall he see *Maries* sonne deeming the worlde, whom he despised and set on the Crosse: Woe to the false Christenmon that knew the wille of his Lord and fullfilled it nought.

For I say unto thee, that hast shut out the meine of God, that is, minde of his passhun, holie contemplashun of his goodnesse, and memory of his benefits, fro the chamber of thy hert; and hast made it a house of Swyn, and a den of Theeves, by uncleane thoughtis and delightis. As thou here hast sperd God out of thine hert, so he shall spere thee out of Heven: Thou hast herberwid the meine of the Fiend, and with them in Hell thou shalt ever abide: Woe alsoe for sinne of speech, for thou might not open thy foule and stinking mouthe with the whych thou hast spoken unhoneestly, cursing, fraude, deceite, leasings, forswearing, scorning, and backebiten. For loving is not comynlych in mouthes of sinners. For in the whych gif thou haddest kept thy mouthe cleane, thou shuldest have songed in fellowship of Angels this blessed song; *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus omnipotens*; Holie, Holie, Holie, Lord God Almighty. Then yeling and weep-
en thou shalt cry in company of Devils;

Væ,